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THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Bosnian Serbs continue to detain or blockade 450 United Nations personnel in various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina; civilian aid worker taken hostage in Banja Luka.

+ Senior United Nations officials begin two-day meeting at Headquarters to discuss United Nations development activities and related reforms.

+ Secretary-General plans to upgrade United Nations crime and justice programme within two years, Commission on Crime Prevention is told.

+ 351 Uruguayan peace-keepers arrive in Angola; Special Representative meets with Angolan President and UNITA leader to discuss continued implementation of Lusaka Protocol.

+ Special Representative for Burundi briefs Security Council; describes situation in Bujumbura as tense, citing daily reports of armed incidents.

+ Committee on Rights of Child discusses collaboration in human rights field and impact of armed conflict on children.

+ Saad Alfarargi of Egypt appointed as Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of Programme's Regional Bureau for Arab States.

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Bosnian Serb forces today continued to detain or blockade around 450 United Nations personnel in various parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, according to a United Nations spokesman. He stressed that they should be released immediately and unconditionally.

Some 200 of the United Nations personnel were being detained, while the remaining 250 were being blockaded, the spokesman continued. The latter

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figure included 45 Canadian peace-keepers who had been resupplied despite the restrictions. Meanwhile, the Bosnian Serbs took a non-military United Nations relief worker hostage in the Banja Luka area.

The spokesman said 1,000 firing incidents had been recorded in Sarajevo over the previous 24 hours. One French peace-keeper suffered minor injuries after being hit by fragments. There was also fresh fighting between Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serb forces on the east bank of the Drina River in Gorazde.

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Senior United Nations officials from various departments, programmes, funds and regional commissions have begun a two-day meeting at Headquarters to discuss issues related to the Organization's development activities. The meeting was chaired today by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator James Gustave Speth. It will be joined by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali tomorrow morning.

Participants are reviewing progress achieved in the reform agenda set out in the Secretary-General's recommendations on "An agenda for development". He proposed improvements in United Nations development activities "not because these efforts are failing but because they are succeeding". He stated that he would convene frequent meetings of all senior officials in the economic and social sector to improve overall programme coordination and policy coherence within the Organization.

The meeting underway provides an opportunity for senior officials to discuss preparations for this year's substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, including the triennial policy review of United Nations operational activities for development. Attention will be paid to the results of the World Summit for Social Development, as well as the follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted in Copenhagen. Participants will also hear a report on the progress achieved in implementing the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) initiative on Africa.

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The Secretary-General plans to upgrade the United Nations crime and justice programme within the next two years, according to Giorgio Giacomelli, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Vienna. He made that announcement to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, which has begun a two-week session in Vienna.

The proposal, contained in a report before the Commission, calls for upgrading the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Branch of the Secretariat to a division. It will mean asking the General Assembly to provide additional resources to enable the Commission to help States combat new forms of trans-border crime and generally strengthen the rule of law worldwide.

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Mr. Giacomelli urged the 40-member Commission to translate into reality the consensus achieved at the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. He served as Secretary-General of the Congress, which took place in Cairo from 29 April to 8 May.

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Some 350 Uruguayan peace-keepers have arrived in Luanda, Angola, a United Nations spokesman announced today. He said the rest of the Uruguayan contribution to the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III) was expected to arrive tomorrow. An Indian battalion would arrive in early July, to be followed by a Zimbabwean battalion later in the month. A Romanian field hospital was already operational in the Angolan capital.

The spokesman pointed out that the parties must continue to implement the Lusaka Protocol for the deployment of UNAVEM III to continue. He stressed the importance of disarmament, disengagement of troops, observation of the cease-fire and demining activities. In that regard, Special Representative Alioune Blondin Beye had had meetings earlier this week with President Jose Eduardo dos Santos and the leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Jonas Savimbi.

The Joint Commission would meet tomorrow to discuss, in particular, the reopening of roads and the free movement of goods, the spokesman added.

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Special Representative Ahmedou Ould Abdallah today briefed the Security Council on the situation in Burundi, according to a United Nations spokesman. He described the situation as tense, with daily reports of armed incidents in parts of Bujumbura following the recent three-day strike there.

The spokesman noted that a high-level Organization of African Unity (OAU) mission was currently in Bujumbura. That mission was chaired by the Secretary-General of the OAU.

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The Committee on the Rights of the Child has held an exchange of views with various United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations on improving collaboration in the field of human rights. As the Committee continued its ninth session in Geneva this week, it also held a discussion with the Special Rapporteurs of the Commission of Human Rights on Rwanda and on child prostitution.

The Committee has also been dealing with the impact of armed conflict on children. Graca Machel, Chairman of a team studying that topic, said children were no longer simple victims of conflicts -- they were weapons of war, actors in wars and the adults who manipulated them should be ashamed. She said the use of children in war was getting out of control, citing her recent field visit to Rwanda.

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Saad Alfarargi of Egypt has been appointed as Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States. Mr. Alfarargi is currently Egypt's Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs. He will assume his new duties in August.

Mr. Alfarargi served as Egypt's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva from 1983 to 1987. He was Senior Political Officer, Centre for Disarmament, in the Department for Political and Security Council Affairs from 1977 to 1979.

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